

REMARKS

Claims 24-37 have been added. Claims 24-37 are computer readable medium claims that substantially correspond to pending method claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-13, and 18-20, respectively. Claims 1-23 have not been amended. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-37 will be pending in the present application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a)

The Examiner has finally rejected claims 1-7, 11, and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Bellemore et al. (US 5,944,825), claims 8-10, 12-15 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Bellemore in view of Novoa et al. (US 6,636,973), and claims 16-17 and 22-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Bellemore and Novoa in view of Schneier (Bruce Schneier, "Applied Cryptography, Second Edition). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In the "Response to Arguments" section of the Final Rejection (pages 2-5), the Examiner again finds Applicant's arguments "not persuasive" and again alleges that Bellemore teaches at column 4, line 33, to column 5, line 41, the claimed "password database" and "password database other than the password database for storing a new password or data indicative of the new password and associating same with authentication for the user." Applicant respectfully disagrees. Bellemore teaches the conventional concept of periodically changing passwords so long as the passwords meet certain criteria. Bellemore simply does NOT teach the use of two independent databases for storing a new password as claimed. Indeed, as previously noted (and the Examiner's arguments to the contrary notwithstanding), Bellemore completely fails to teach the following bolded features in each of independent claims 1, 5, 7, and 20.

Independent claim 1 recites:

detecting an occurrence of a password change operation in execution on a system having a password database that stores passwords resulting from a password change operation; detecting a new password when provided; and,

storing data indicative of the new password in a database other than the password database for later retrieval, the data indicative of the new password for use in **providing the new password to the system automatically**.

Independent claim 5 recites:

detecting a change password operation in execution on a system for changing an old password, the system having a password database that stores said old password;
displaying to a user a prompt for a new password, in response to detecting the change password operation in execution and other than occurring as an operation of the change password operation;
receiving the new password;
performing an operation to change the old password to the new password in the system automatically; and,
storing the new password in a database independent of the change password operation and other than the password database where the new password is stored by the change password operation.

Independent claim 7 recites:

detecting a password change operation in execution on a system having a password database that stores passwords resulting from a password change operation;
displaying to a user a prompt for authentication information in response to detecting the change password operation in execution and other than occurring as an operation of the change password operation;
receiving the authentication information;
when the authentication information is indicative of a known user, **performing an operation to change a password of the known user to a new password in the system automatically**; and,
storing the new password in a database independent of the change password operation and other than the password database where the changed password is stored by the change password operation.

Independent claim 20 recites:

detecting a password change operation in execution on a system having a known user authorized thereon;

automatically generating a new password in response to detecting the password change operation and other than occurring as an operation of the change password operation and storing the new password in a password database;

performing an operation to change a password to the new password in the system automatically; and,

storing the new password in a database independent of the change password operation and other than the password database where the changed password is stored.

Corresponding features may be found in respective newly added independent computer readable medium claims 24, 27, 29 and 37. At least the claimed features highlighted above are not shown or suggested by the prior art relied upon by the Examiner for the reasons given below.

Bellemore

Bellemore disclose a database system having its own security and password mechanisms independent of the security and password mechanisms of an associated server. A script is invoked to determine whether a provided password meets certain password criteria. Figure 4 illustrates the steps taken by a security process when the client transmits a password change request to the database. As illustrated, the security process receives the client user ID, password, and the proposed new password. A script executing process 205 executes a verification script and transmits a message indicating whether the proposed password meets the criteria embodied in the script. A message is also provided to the client indicating whether the password and user ID combination is valid. Such scripts enable the database to provide security independent of the server upon which it resides.

Claims 1-7, 11, and 18-20

As noted in previous responses, Bellemore clearly does NOT teach the use of two password databases comprising the “password database that stores passwords resulting from a password change operation” and “a database other than the password database” for “storing data indicative of the new password” for later retrieval. Bellemore does NOT teach such a separate password database system for tracking password changes. As each of the independent claims recites two password databases, the anticipation rejection over Bellemore is believed to be improper.

In response, the Examiner simply quotes column 4, lines 33-42, of Bellemore and alleges that the user table, user profile table and user history table comprise the “database other than the password database.” However, this is clearly an improper reading of the teachings of Bellemore. Bellemore teaches a single database 220 that includes the tables referenced by the Examiner. While database 220 may reasonably be argued to correspond to the claimed “password database,” database 220 clearly does not, and cannot, correspond to BOTH the “password database” and “the database other than the password database.” Applicant can find no reference by Bellemore to a second password database, nor does the language in Bellemore referenced by the Examiner in any way refer to such a second password database. If it is the Examiner’s allegation that one or more of the tables taught by Bellemore correspond to the “database other than the password database,” then this is an erroneous reading of the Bellemore reference as well, for the tables 207-210 taught by Bellemore do not store the password data in one password database and contain data “indicative of the new password” in another password database. Instead, the tables 207-210 contain data relating to thresholds associated with individual users or classes of users (*e.g.*, a threshold number of attempts of using an invalid password in combination with a user ID that can occur before the account is locked), current states of a user account (*e.g.*, number of invalid login attempts), data about previously used passwords, etc. No two databases or fields contain the new password or data indicative of the new password as claimed. For this reason, the anticipation rejection over Bellemore is unsupported and cannot be sustained.

Moreover, Bellemore provides no teachings relevant to changing passwords for several systems/files/applications *automatically* as claimed.

Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1-7, 11, and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Bellemore et al. is clearly improper and should be withdrawn. As Bellemore does not anticipate the method of claims 1, 5, 7, or 20 or any of the claims dependent thereon, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-7, 11, and 18-21 over Bellemore is appropriate and is respectfully requested. New claims 24-37 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons.

Claims 8-10, 12-17, and 21-23

The Examiner has cited Novoa with respect to dependent claims 8-10, 12-15, and 21 and Schneier with respect to claims 16-17 and 22-23. Inasmuch as neither Novoa nor

Schneier teaches a method of securely supporting password change by detecting the occurrence of a password change operation that changes a password and stores same in a password database and further performs the steps of "performing an operation to change a password of the known user to a new password in the system automatically" and "storing the new password in a database independent of the change password operation and other than the password database where the changed password is stored by the change password operation" as claimed, even if the teachings of Novoa alone or Novoa and Schneier could have been combined with the teachings of Bellemore as proposed by the Examiner, the claimed invention would not result. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 8-10, 12-17 and 21-23 is thus solicited.

Moreover, Applicant again notes that the Examiner has provided no reason or suggestion for combining the teachings of Bellemore and Novoa or Bellemore, Novoa and Schneier to arrive at the claimed invention. It is unclear to Applicant what teaching is provided to combine the teachings of the references to provide a new password that is an "encryption key" and what relevance such a combination would have to the claimed invention in any event. Applicant again submits that there is no teaching, suggestion, or motivation for combining the cited documents and that the proposed combination is thus improper. To sustain a proper rejection based on *prima facie* obviousness, the Examiner is required, and is hereby once again requested, to provide a reason, suggestion or motivation as to why one skilled in the art at the time of the invention would have known to combine the teachings of Bellemore and Novoa alone or Novoa and Schneier as proposed to arrive at the claimed invention. Absent such suggestions or motivation, the rejections of claims 8-10, 12-17 and 21-23 are improper and must be withdrawn.

For these reasons, claims 8-10, 12-17 and 21-23, as well as new claim 24-37, are believed to be allowable for the same reasons as given above with respect to independent claims 1, 5, 7 and 20, respectively.

Conclusion

In view of the above, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-7, 11, and 18-20 as being anticipated by Bellemore and claims 8-10, 12-17 and 21-23 as being obvious over Bellemore in view of Novoa alone or Novoa and Schneier is respectfully requested.

Withdrawal of the rejections under Section 103 is further requested in view of the Examiner's

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failure to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness due to the lack of any proposed reason or motivation for one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Bellemore, Novoa alone or Novoa and Schneier as proposed. Allowance of new claims 24-37 is requested for the same reasons as corresponding independent claims 1, 5, 7, and 20.

The present response is believed to obviate all rejections of record. Entry of this amendment is believed to place the present application in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of all rejections and issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully requested.

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